

Message Text

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61

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

IO-10 /085 W

----- 015394

R 221322Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2226

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

UNCLAS TRIPOLI 0586

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RP

SUBJECT: LATEST MNLF PRESS STATEMENT

REF: TRIPOLI 531

1. ABD AL BAQI ABU BAKR, DESCRIBED AS HEAD OF FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR THE MNLF, HAS GIVEN A STATEMENT TO THE LIBYAN NEWS AGENCY WHICH IS CARRIED IN PRESS HERE MAY 22.

2. ABU BAKR CONDEMNS "THE PHONY TALKS RECENTLY REPORTED BY INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES BETWEEN MARCOS AND SO-CALLED REBEL LEADERSHIP. IN FACT THEY WERE BETWEEN A GANG OF CRIMINALS AND HIGHWAY ROBBERS USED BY MARCOS TO COMBAT THE MUSLIM REBELS AND A MARCOS DELEGATION LED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S AMBASSADOR TO JIDDA. THIS MAN, WHO CLAIMS TO BE A MUSLIM, PLAYED A DISGRACEFUL PART IN THE JIDDA TALKS, USING ALL MEANS, INCLUDING ATTEMPTED BRIBERY,

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TO GET THE MUSLIM REBELS TO SCALE DOWN THEIR DEMANDS".

3. ABU BAKR ALSO CONDEMNS "MARCOS LIES ABOUT THE PHONEY REFERENDUM WHICH WILL NOT GUARANTEE THE DEMANDS OF THE MUSLIMS IN THE SOUTH. WE ARE NOT AMONG THOSE WHO CALL FOR BREAK-UP AND PARTITION. WE ARE ONLY ASKING FOR OUR JUST AND LEGAL RIGHT TO LIVE IN FREEDOM IN OUR OWN LAND AND TO RULE OURSELVES BY OURSELVES".

4. HE ALSO ATTACKED THE EGYPTIAN PRESS, AND CONDEMned DAILY AHRAM IN PARTICULAR FOR PRINTING A FULL PAGE SPREAD ON MARCOS DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE SOUTH. "THIS IS PARTICULARLY REGRETTABLE AT A TIME WHEN THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT HAS LANDED 30,000 ARMED TROOPS ON THE MUSLIM ISLAND OF BASILAN".

5. AT THE END OF HIS STATEMENT, ABU BAKR EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT SECESSION WAS NOT THE MNLF GOAD: "THE PHILIPPINE MUSLIMS ARE NOT CALLING FOR SECESSION, BUT FOR SECURITY FOR THEIR FUTURE AND THEIR POSSESSIONS, WHICH CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH GRANTING THE FOUR ISLAMIC ISLANDS, MINDANAO, BALAWAN, BASILAN, AND SULU, AUTONOMY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PHILIPPINE REPUBLIC AND ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY".

6. COMMENT: THIS LAST SENTENCE IN PARTICULAR STRIKES US AS

SOUNDING A RELATIVELY MODERATE NOTE.

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